

REMARKS

Claims 1-27 were amended. New claims 28-30 were added. Favorable reconsideration of this application is respectfully requested in light of the following remarks.

Drawing Objections

Replacement pages to Figures 1-3, and 8 are enclosed herewith. As suggested by the Examiner, the enclosed figures now include reference labels with descriptive text as described in the specification on pages 5-7 and 13.

Objections to the Specification

In addition to those suggested by the Examiner, corrections were made to the specification and claims to correct spelling and obvious grammatical errors. Furthermore, the phrase "What is claimed is" was added after the last paragraph of the detailed description section just prior to the claims section.

Claim Objections

Claims 4, 7, and 9 were objected to for various informalities and were therefore corrected. Claim 4 now reads "one regional" instead of "on e regional" and claims 7 and 8 now reads "to identify" instead of "to identity."

Claims 4-10, 13-21, and 23-26 were objected to because they are multiple dependent claims that dependent from another multiple dependent claim, and thus the claims were not further treated on the merits. Accordingly, the Applicant has amended the claims by removing all multiple dependencies. Further treatment of the claims is respectfully requested.

35 U.S.C. §112 Rejections

Claim 1 was rejected for being narrative and indefinite and failing to conform to current U.S. practice, as indicated in item 11 of the Official Action. Accordingly, the Applicant has amended claim 1 to more clearly claim the subject-matter in accordance with current claiming practice. Specifically, the claim elements are now listed separately and independently. No new matter was added. Additionally, the term "characterized in that" were removed from the claims to better conform to current U.S. claiming practice.

In view of the foregoing clarification, a withdrawal of the 35 U.S.C. §112 rejections is respectfully requested.

35 U.S.C. §102(e) Rejection

The Examiner rejected claims 1 and 11 under 35 U.S.C. §102(e) as being anticipated by Skopp et al. (US 6,256,739).

Skopp discloses a method and apparatus to determine a user's identity in order to limit access to a communications network. In other words, the invention of Skopp relates to determining the user's identity in order to decide to grant access to a communications network and retrieve requested information such as a URL by the user, as stated on col.3, lines 60-67, and in the abstract. In the technique described on col. 4, lines 51-67 and shown in Fig. 1B, the user's computer or client computer accesses the Internet 100 through an access control system 300. The user's computer first connects to an access control proxy 310 within the access control system. To make the identification, a first message containing user identity information is received from the client computer by the access control system proxy. Subsequently, a second message containing the information request or URL is received from the client computer. As shown in Fig. 1B, the access control proxy 310 is connected to the controller 320 which contains a user identity database 345 for which to identify the user by password authentication, as stated in col. 6, lines 55-64.

In contrast, the method and objective of the present invention is completely different in that the user's identifying information is determined without the user's intervention i.e. the user is not required to enter a password in a log-in procedure in order to identify to be

established, as stated on page 2, lines 5-16 in the description. For example and with reference to Fig. 3, when the computer user requests a web page from the Internet, the website sends a request for the user's identifying information to a third party entity via the Internet if the website initially cannot determine the user's identity. The third party entity retrieves the user's identifying information from a stored database accessible by the third party entity if the current identifying information sought is included in the database. If it is not or the information is outdated, the third party entity retrieves the identifying information from the Internet access provider that the user is using. The identifying information is sent to the third party entity which forwards it to the website.

The presently amended claims 1 and 11 clearly state that the identifying information is sent via the Internet to the control means 101 or 103 of the third party entity and forwarded to the service device 108 or the original website. This is not the case in Skopp since the identifying information is retrieved within the access control system 300 and not through the Internet 100, as can be seen in Fig. 1b. Furthermore, Skopp does not disclose a service device, a third party entity (control means 101 or 103), and an access device 105a communicating in the manner as claimed in the present invention.

In view of the foregoing clarifications, a withdrawal of the 35 U.S.C. §102(e) rejection is respectfully requested.

35 U.S.C. §103 Rejection

The Examiner rejected claims 2-10 and 12-26 under 35 U.S.C. §102(e) as being unpatentable over Skopp as applied to claims 1 and 11 and in view by Tran (US 6,505,238).

The Examiner states that Skopp does not disclose a distributed communication system that is divided into a number of geographical regions. However, the Examiner states that Tran discloses a distributed communication system that is divided into two different geographical regions based on the distance between the cities (Figure 2). As stated in the foregoing discussion, Skopp's technique involves user login procedures, at least in part, to determine the user's identifying information. Furthermore, the invention disclosed in Tran is for a method for allowing remote login to a user's personal workstation which requires the

user to enter through a login information into a web page, as stated in col. 3, line 51 to col. 4, line 4 in addition to the abstract. As stated previously, the objective of present invention is to obtain user identifying information without the need for the user to go through login procedures.

The Applicant respectfully submits that the cited combination of Skopp and Tran is not appropriate in view of the objective of the present invention of not requiring intervention by the user to obtain identifying information. Thus, a skilled person in the art would not look to Skopp or Tran for the aforementioned reason. Accordingly, withdrawal of the 35 U.S.C. §103 rejections is respectfully requested.

New Claims

New claims 28-30 were added that more clearly claims the subject-matter of the present invention. No new matter was added. The new claims differ from Skopp in that the identifying information is forwarded over the Internet from a third party entity in a manner that does not require user login procedures. Earlier comments speaking to the difference between Skopp and Tran and the present invention apply. Applicant thus submits that the new claims are patentable over the cited art.

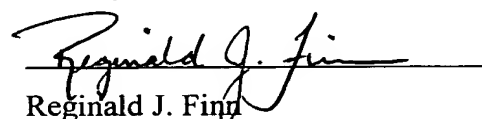
Accordingly, the Applicant submits that all claims are patentable over the cited art and requests that all rejections of record be withdrawn. Allowance of this application is earnestly solicited.

Should any questions arise in connection with this application, the undersigned can be contacted at the information indicated below.

Respectfully submitted,
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Marked-up Claims

1. (Currently Amended) A system operable to identify and access information about a user (109) of a distributed communication system in real time without the users intervention, wherein the system comprises at least one service device (108) operable to provide services to said user (109), at least one access device (105a) operable to provide access to said distributed communication system, ~~characterized in that~~ wherein said system also comprises:

at least one control means (101; 103) is connected to said at least one access device (105a) and to said at least one service device (108) via the Internet, ~~a-to~~ wherein said at least one access device (105a) is connected to an identification device (113) operable to identifying an address of a specific user;

at least one storage device (102; 104) connected to said at least one control means (101; 103), ~~and a-to~~ wherein said at least one control means (101; 103) is connected to a cache means (111) operable to store mappings of said addresses and identifications ~~for~~ of said users (109), wherein said service device (108) sends a request for information about a the user requesting a service from said service device (108) to said control means (101; 103), ~~which~~ such that the control means (101; 103) checks if said cache means contains an up to date identification; ~~and~~ whereby

if said check gives an affirmative answer, said control means (101; 103) fetches said information from said storage device (102; 104) and sends a reply comprising said information to said service device (108); and

if said check gives a negative answer, said control means (101; 103) sends a request for a real time identification of said address to said, access device (105a), ~~which~~ wherein said access device (105a) identifies said address with the aid of said identification device (113) and sends said identification to said control means (101; 103), ~~which~~ such that said control means (101; 103) fetches said information from said storage device (102; 104) and sends a reply comprising said information to said service device (108) that identifies the user.

2. (Currently Amended) A system operable to identify and access information about a user (109) of a distributed communication system according to Claim 1, ~~characterized in that~~ wherein said system is divided into a number of geographical regions based on the distance between different geographical regions.

3. (Currently Amended) A system operable to identify and access information about a user (109) of a distributed communication system according to Claim 2, ~~characterized in that~~ wherein said distance is measured by the delay between individual control means (101; 103) in said system.

4. (Currently Amended) A system operable to identify and access information about a user (109) of a distributed communication system according to claim 2 ~~any one of Claims 2—3,~~ ~~characterized in that~~ wherein each geographical region comprises a central control means (101), a central storage device (102), and in that each geographical region can comprise at least one regional control means (103), at least ~~one~~ one regional storage device (104), and at least one access device (105a).

5. (Currently Amended) A system operable to identify and access information about a user (109) of a distributed communication system according to claim 2 ~~Claim 4,~~ ~~characterized in that~~ wherein each geographical region also can comprise a supplier means (106a) operable to distribute information, and at least one attach means (107a) operable to attach additional information to identifications, wherein said supplier means (106a) is connected to said at least one access device (105a) and to said at least one attach means (107a).

6. (Currently Amended) A system operable to identify and access information about a user (109) of a distributed communication system according to claim 1 ~~any one of Claims 1—5,~~ ~~characterized in that~~ wherein each service device (108) is connected to a first interface unit (110), which in turn is connected to said-at least one control means (101; 103), in that each control means (101; 103) is connected to a second interface unit (112), which in turn is

connected to said at least one access device (105a), and in that each control means (101; 103) also is connected to said at least one storage device (102; 104).

7. (Currently Amended) A system operable to identify identity and access information about a user (109) of a distributed communication system according to claim 1 ~~any one of Claims 1–6~~, ~~characterized in that~~ wherein said distributed communication system is the Internet.

8. (Currently Amended) A system operable to identify identity and access information about a user (109) of a distributed communication system according to claim 1 ~~any one of Claims 1–7~~, ~~characterized in that~~ wherein each service device (108) is an online service provider (108), each access device (105a) is an Internet access provider (105a), and each control means (101; 103) is a server (101: 103).

9. (Currently Amended) A system operable to identify and access information about a user (109) of a distributed communication system according to claim 1 ~~any one of Claims 5–8~~, ~~characterized in that~~ wherein each supplier means (106a) is a first supplier server (106a), and each attach means (107a) is a second supplier server (107a).

10. (Currently Amended) A system operable to identify and access information about a user (109) of io a distributed communication system according to claim 1 ~~any one of Claims 7–9~~, ~~characterized in that~~ wherein said address of a user (109) is an IP-address.

11. A method for identifying and accessing information about a user (109) of a distributed communication system in real time without the users intervention, is wherein said method is performed with the aid of a system comprising at least one service device (108) operable to provide services to said user (109), and at least one access device (105a) operable to provide access to said distributed communication system, said method comprises the steps of:

- requesting a service by that a user (109) ~~requests a service (A)~~, implicitly or explicitly, from a service device (108);

- sending a request by ~~that~~ said service device (108) ~~sends a request~~ for additional information about said user (109) to a control means (101; 103);
- checking, by said control means (101, 103), ~~checks~~ if a cache means (111) connected to said control means (101; 103) contains an up to date identification; whereby
 - if said check gives an affirmative answer, said control means (101; 103) fetches said information from ~~a to~~ said control means (101; 103) connected to a storage device (102; 104) and sends a reply comprising said information to said service device (108); or
 - if said check gives a negative answer, said control means (101, 103) sends a request for a real time identification of an address of said user (109) to said access device (105a);
- identifying ~~said access device (105a) identifies~~ said address, by said access device (105a) with the aid of ~~a to said access device (105a)~~ connected identification device (113), and wherein said access device sends said identification to said control means (101; 103) via the Internet; and
- fetching ~~said control means (101; 103) fetches~~ said information from ~~a to said control means (101; 103) connected~~ storage device (102; 104), and sends sending a reply comprising said information to said service device (108).

12. (Currently Amended) A method for identifying and accessing information about a user (109) of a distributed communication system according to Claim 11, ~~characterized in that~~ wherein said system also comprises a ~~to~~ said each service device (108) connected, first interface unit (110), and a ~~to~~ said each control means (101; 103) connected, second interface unit (112), wherein the method also comprises the following steps:

- forwarding said request sent from said service device (108) ~~is forwarded~~ by said first interface unit (110), ~~which~~ such that the first interface unit (110) decides which control means (101; 103) to send said request to; and
- forwarding said request sent from said control means (101; 103) for a real time identification of an address of said user (109) ~~is forwarded~~ by said second interface unit (112) which selects ~~which~~ the access device (105a) to send said request to.

13. (Currently Amended) A method for identification and accessing information about a user (109) of a distributed communication system according to claim 11 ~~any one of Claims 11-12~~, ~~characterized in that~~ wherein said system is divided into a number of geographical regions based on the distance between different geographical regions.

14. (Currently Amended) A method for identification and accessing information about a user (109) of a distributed communication system according to Claim 13, ~~characterized in that~~ wherein said distance is measured by the delay between individual control means (101;103) in said system.

15. (Currently Amended) A method for identification and accessing information about a user (109) of a distributed communication system according to claim 13 ~~any one of Claims 13-14~~, ~~characterized in that~~ wherein each geographical region comprises a central control means (101), a central storage device (102), and in that each geographical region can comprise at least one regional control means (103), at least one regional storage device (104), at least one access device (105a), a supplier means (106a) operable to distribute information, and at least one attach means (107a) operable to attach additional information to identifications, wherein said supplier means (106a) is connected to said at least one access device (105a) and to said at least one attach means (107a).

16. (Currently Amended) A method for identification and accessing information about a user (109) of a distributed communication system according to claim 11 ~~any one of Claims 11-15~~, ~~characterized in that~~ wherein said method also comprises the following steps:

- updating by said control means (101; 103) ~~updates~~ said cache means (111) with a mapping between said address and an identification for each said request forwarded by said first interface unit (110);
- receiving by said control means (101; 103) ~~receives~~ a mapping between said address and said identification by querying said access device (105a), or directly from another control means (101; 103);

- storing by said control means (101; 103) ~~stores~~ said mapping together with a time stamp in an internal cache means (111); and
- iterating by said control means (101; 103) ~~iterates~~ through the currently stored mappings between said address and said identification in said ~~internal~~ cache means (111) if a predetermined time has elapsed since the stored time stamp for said entry; ~~and~~ whereby
 - if said address is invalid, which is verified by querying said access device 105a, said entry in said internal cache means (111) is removed; or
 - if said address is valid, which is verified by querying said access device 105a, said entry is updated with a new time stamp.

17. (Currently Amended) A method for identification and accessing information about a user (109) of a distributed communication system according to claim 15 ~~anyone of Claims 15—16,~~ ~~characterized in that~~ wherein said method also comprises the following steps:

- downloading by said central control means (101), within a first geographical region, ~~downloads~~ mappings between access account information and an identifier from said access device (105a), which mapping data is stored in said central storage device (102) within said first geographical region;
- downloading by said supplier means (106a) within said first geographical region ~~downloads~~ mappings between access account information and an identifier from said access device (105a) within said first geographical region;
- distributing by said supplier means (106a) within said first geographical region ~~distributes~~ said information and identifier to said attach means (107a) in said first region, which attach means (107a) attach additional information to said identifier;
- sending, by said attach means (107a) in said first region, ~~sends~~ the new total information and identifier to said central control means (101) within said first region; and
- storing said new total information and identifier ~~are stored~~ in said central storage device (102) in said first region.

18. (Currently Amended) A method for identification and accessing information about a user (109) of a distributed communication system according to Claim 17, ~~characterized in that~~ wherein said method also comprises the steps of:

- distributing, by said central control means (101), ~~distributes~~ said mapping data to said regional control means (103); and
- storing said mapping data ~~are stored~~ in said regional storage device (104).

19. (Currently Amended) A method for identification and accessing information about a user (109) of a distributed communication system according to claim 15 ~~any one of Claims 15–18~~, ~~characterized in that~~ wherein said method also comprises the steps of:

- distributing, by said central control means (101) in said first region, ~~distributes~~ said mapping data to central control means (101) in another geographical region if there are service devices (108) requesting said information from said regional control means (103) or said central control means (101) in another region than said first region; and
- storing said mappings data ~~are stored~~ in said central storage device (102) in said another region.

20. (Currently Amended) A method for identification and accessing information about a user (109) of a distributed communication system according to claim 15 ~~any one of Claims 15–19~~, ~~characterized in that~~ wherein said method also comprises the ~~steps~~ step of:

- distributing, by said central control means (101) in said first region, ~~distributes~~ said mapping data to regional control means (103) in other geographical regions if there are service devices (108) in another region than said first region requesting said information from sad regional control means (103).

21. (Currently Amended) A method for identification and accessing information about a user (109) of a distributed communication system according to claim 15 ~~any one of Claims 15–20~~, ~~characterized in that~~ wherein said method also comprises the step of:

- providing a possibility for ~~that~~ said user (109) ~~can~~ to interact with said control means (101; 103).

22. (Currently Amended) A method for identification and accessing information about a user (109) of a distributed communication system according to Claim 12, ~~characterized in that~~ wherein said interaction is comprised of said user (109) is giving feedback to an action taken by said service device (108), wherein said feedback is stored in said storage device (102; 104).

23. (Currently Amended) A method for identification and accessing information about a user (109) of a distributed communication system according to claim 11 ~~any one of Claims 11–22~~, ~~characterized in that~~ wherein said distributed communication system is the Internet.

24. (Currently Amended) A method for identification and accessing information about a user (109) of a distributed communication system according to claim 11 ~~any one of Claims 11–23~~, ~~characterized in that~~ wherein each service device (108) is an online service provider (108), each access device (105a) is an Internet access provider (105a), and each control means (101; 103) is a server (101; 103).

25. (Currently Amended) A method for identification and accessing information about a user (109) of a distributed communication system according to claim 15 ~~any one of Claims 15–24~~, ~~characterized in that~~ wherein each supplier means (106a) is a first supplier server (106a), and each attach means (107a) is a second supplier server (107a).

26. (Currently Amended) A method for identification and accessing information about a user (109) of a distributed communication system according to claim 15 ~~any one of Claims 15–25~~, ~~characterized in that~~ wherein said address of a user (109) is an IP-address.

27. At least one computer program product (102₁, ..., 102_n) directly loadable into the internal memory of at least one digital computer (100₁, ..., 100_n), comprising software code portions for performing the steps of claim 11 when said at least one product (102₁, ..., 102_n) is/are run on said at least one computer (102₁, ... , 100_n).

Please add the following new claims

28. (New Claim) A method of identifying and obtaining information about a computer user that accesses a website or a service on the Internet in a manner that requires no interaction from the user in the form of stored data on the user's computer or log-in procedures, the method comprising the steps of:

requesting a website or a service from the Internet by the computer user;
sending a request for identifying information on the user to a third party entity via the Internet if the website initially cannot determine the user's identity;
retrieving the user's identifying information from a stored database accessible by the third party entity if the identifying information sought is included in the database;
retrieving the user's identifying information, by the third party entity, from an Internet access provider associated with the user's present session if the identifying information sought is not included in the database or is outdated; and
sending the identifying information from the third party entity to the website.

29. (New Claim) A method according to claim 28, wherein the computer user, website, and third party entity may be located in different geographical regions.

30. (New Claim) A method according to claim 28, wherein the third party entity checks a cache means for updated information on the user prior to the step of retrieving the user's identifying information from the stored database.
